

Message Text

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51 S

ACTION EA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3018

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6812

FROM AMBASSADOR DEAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, CB, TH

SUBJ: ASSISTANCE TO CAMBODIAN REFUGEES IN THAILAND

CAMBODIA-B NO. 63

REF: STATE 089680

1. REFTEL INVITED ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS. FROM PERSPECTIVE OF OUR FORMER MISSION IN PHNOM PENH, I HAVE A FEW.

2. WE CERTAINLY WELCOME NEWS THAT DEPARTMENT EXPECTS PAROLE WILL BE GRANTED FOR THOSE CAMBODIANS EVACUATED BY U.S. HOWEVER, SECOND SENTENCE OF PARA ONE OF REFTEL LEAVES ME WITH A PROFOUND SENSE OF UNEASE IN THAT IT INDICATES WE WISH TO MAKE THE MAXIMUM EFFORT POSSIBLE TO PASS ON TO OTHERS THE RESPONSIBILITY WE OWE TO THE CAMBODIANS WHOM WE EVACUATED FROM PHNOM PENH. I AM OF COURSE THINKING ESPECIALLY OF THE LOCAL EMPLOYEES OF OUR MISSION, WHO WITH THEIR DEPENDENTS FORM THE BULK OF THE CAMBODIAN GROUP THAT WE EVACUATED.

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I WOULD EXPECT THAT THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SUCH AS CRS,

IN THE CASE OF ITS LOCAL EMPLOYEES WE EVACUATED, OR THE NEW YORK TIMES, WHOSE LOCAL STRINGER AND HIS FAMILY WENT OUT WITH US ON "EAGLE PULL", WOULD THEMSELVES EVENTUALLY LOOK AFTER THEIR FORMER EMPLOYEES.

3. I BELIEVE WE NEED TO MAKE A DISTINCTION (AS THE THAIS ALREADY HAVE) BETWEEN THOSE CAMBODIANS WE EVACUATED, AND THOSE WHO FLED AND ARE FLEEING THAT COUNTRY ON THEIR OWN. IT WOULD IN MY VIEW BE ENTIRELY APPROPRIATE TO MOUNT AN INTERNATIONAL RESETTLEMENT EFFORT FOR CAMBODIAN REFUGEES IN GENERAL, BUT FOR THOSE CAMBODIANS, WHETHER IN OUR DIRECT EMPLOY OR NOT, WHO ACCEPTED OUR OFFER TO TRANSPORT THEM TO SAFETY OUTSIDE CAMBODIA, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD COMPLETE THE CARRYING OUT OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY BY OFFERING THEM PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES.

4. WE ARE FULLY COGNIZANT THAT THE DEPARTMENT, IN ESTABLISHING PRINCIPLE AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CAMBODIAN REFUGEES, IS CONCERNED OVER PRECEDENTS THAT MIGHT BE SET FOR SOUTH VIETNAM. ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS I OFFERED TO EVACUATE A LIMITED NUMBER OF CAMBODIANS WHOSE LIVES WOULD BE INDANGERED FOLLOWING A KC TAKEOVER OWING TO THEIR FORMER CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES, AND SINCE WE HAVE AGREED WITH THE RTG THAT WE WILL MOVE THESE REFUGEES OUT OF THAILAND AS SPEEDILY AS POSSIBLE, I THINK WE MUST OFFER PAROLE TO ANY CAMBODIANS WE EVACUATED WHO WISH TO AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THIS CHANCE. THE NUMBER WE ARE TALKINGABOUT IS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF ONE THOUSAND PEOPLE.

5. THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF A LETTER RECENTLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE WHICH SPEAKS ELOQUENTLY OF THE DEBT WE OWE TO THE FOREIGN NATIONALS WE EMPLOY IN OUR MISSIONS ABROAD:

BEGIN TEXT: "PLEA FROM A 'PAWN' -- TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO I WAS A CITIZEN OF A COUNTRY BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN. I WORKED AT THE U.S. EMBASSY IN AN EXECUTIVE POSITION
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AND WAS WELL THOUGHT OF. AND YET AFTER THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER I WAS UNABLE TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY AND THE AMERICANS DID NOTHING TO SAVE US -- THE LOCAL EMPLOYEES WHO BELIEVED IN THEM.

"LIKE MANY OTHERS I WENT TO PRISON ACCUSED OF INFORMING THE EMBASSY OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES. I SPENT 12 YEARS IN A SECRET CELL, SUBJECTED TO THE TREATMENT

METED OUT TO 'AMERICAN AND IMPERIALIST PAWNS.' I
SURVIVED, THANKS TO GOD'S MERCY AND A STEADFAST BELIEF
THAT AMERICA NEVER FORGETS THOSE WHO WORKED AND SUFFERED
FOR HER.

"TODAY I READ IN YOUR PAPER'S COLUMNS ABOUT THE
VIETNAMESE (AND CAMBODIAN AND PORTUGUESE AND...ETC.)
EMPLOYEES OF AMERICAN COMPANIES AND EMBASSY IN SAIGON,
WHO ARE LEFT POWERLESS TO FACE THE INCOMING COMMUNIST
FORCES. ALL WILL GO TO PRISON, MANY WILL DIE -- THOSE
WHO REMAIN ALIVE WILL NEVER BELIEVE IN DEMOCRACY AND
JUSTICE IN THE WEST AGAIN.

"WITH ALL MY HEART I BEG YOU TO PLEAD IN YOUR
COLUMNS FOR THESE FAITHFUL, LOYAL PEOPLE WHO HAVE WORKED
AND RISKED FOR YOUR COUNTRY. THEY ARE BUT A HANDFUL --
A FEW HUNDRED, NO MORE -- WHO WILL DO MORE FOR YOUR
TARNISHED IMAGE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA THAN THE BRINGING OUT
OF A COUPLE OF THOUSAND CHILDREN ALONE WHO RUN NO
DANGER FOR THE PRESENT. N.I. LEAVITT, PARIT."
END TEXT.
MASTERS

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